



BOARD OF OPTOMETRY
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FACT SHEET CONTINUING OPTOMETRIC EDUCATION

All California licensed optometrists are required to take continuing education (CE) and self-certify that they met CE requirements upon renewal of their "active" optometric license. The CE requirements for optometrists who are certified to prescribe therapeutic pharmaceutical agents (TPA) vs. those who are not TPA certified are explained below. The self-certification can be accessed online by clicking the link below:

[Continuing Education Self Certification \(PDF format\)](#)

LICENSED OPTOMETRIST (NON-TPA)

In order to renew an "active" license, the law requires licensed optometrists who are non-TPA certified to complete 40 hours of board approved CE every two-year renewal period to renew their license as "active" status.

LICENSED OPTOMETRIST (TPA CERTIFIED)

In order to renew an "active" license, the law requires licensed optometrists who are TPA certified to complete 50 hours of CE, 35 of which must be in the diagnosis, treatment and management of ocular disease in any combination of the following areas:

- glaucoma, ocular infection,
- ocular inflammation,
- topical steroids,
- systemic medication, or
- pain medication.

SELF STUDY/CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

The California State Board of Optometry will accept a maximum of 20 hours of CE earned through the completion of acceptable documented and accredited self-study courses. Credit for self study courses (i.e., review of written, audio, video material, or a combination) is given at the ratio of one hour of credit for one hour of self study earned.

APPROVED PROVIDERS

CE courses which are approved as meeting the required standards of the board include those sponsored or recognized by any accredited US school or college of optometry, any national or state affiliate of the American Optometric Association, the American Academy of Optometry, or the Optometric Extension Program. Also acceptable are courses approved by the International Association of Boards of Examiners in Optometry known as COPE (Council on Optometric Practitioner Education).

Click [here](http://www.optometry.ca.gov/laws_regs/2006lawbook.pdf) for more information regarding CE requirements for optometrists. (link to http://www.optometry.ca.gov/laws_regs/2006lawbook.pdf (page 274))

The California State Board of Optometry permits optometrists to earn up to eight hours of Continuing Education (CE) credit in patient care management for courses taken in elder and/or child abuse detection.

These courses aren't just good for CE credits—they are part of an optometrist's legal obligation. The Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA) designates optometrists—and many other licensed professionals—as mandated reporters who must immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect to certain local government agencies.

CANRA requires that any optometrist who has knowledge of or who, in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment, knows of or observes a child whom he or she knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect shall report such suspected incident to a designated agency. The report must be made immediately or as soon as practically possible by telephone and followed up with a written report within 36 hours of receiving the information.

Additional information about CANRA is available on the Board of Optometry's Web site at www.optometry.ca.gov/canra.htm.

Sonoma State University offers a free online course for mandated reporters. The course is four hours long and can be accessed at <http://www.sonoma.edu/c-ihs/mr/docs/traingen.html>.

Note to CE providers: There is no change in the process for obtaining approval of CE courses in adult and child abuse detection.

*** NOTE! Effective January 1, 2007, CPR certification will no longer be required ***
as a condition of renewal